

"MULTUM IN PARVO."

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED BY THE AUTHORS TO THE PEOPLE OF
THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

THE ALL-LEVEE FALLACY EXPOSED

Outlets in Combination with Levees the Only Hope of the
Rich Mississippi Valley.

ADDRESSES OF DR. G. H. TICHENOR, CAPTAIN T. P. LEATHERS
AND GOVERNOR FISHBACK OF ARKANSAS. ON THIS
ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION.

A. M. Escudier, Job Printer, near U. S. Barracks, N. O., La.

ADDRESS OF DR. G. H. TICHENOR,
OF ORLEANS,

Delivered Before the Natchez Outlet and Levee Convention,

HELD AT NATCHEZ, MISS., AUGUST 2, 1893.

(This address was delivered by a resolution to that effect, after said Convention had finished its executive work, and was subsequently published in pamphlet form at the urgent request of many prominent citizens of Louisiana and Mississippi.)

MR. CHAIRMAN AND DELEGATES COM-
POSING THIS INTERSTATE LEVEE
AND OUTLET CONVENTION:

Before proceeding with my address, I have a request to make. If there is a single man in this large audience present that is opposed to levees he will please rise from his seat. The request was repeated, and the result was that not a single man rose. I thank you, gentlemen. I hope that the few papers of the Valley that have insisted on misrepresenting us will hereafter tell the truth concerning what we do advocate.

FELLOW-CITIZENS—We should thank God that light is dawning at last, after a Rip Van Winkle sleep of fifteen years in the Valley. We must also admit that we have been quietly fanned during our sleep, so much so that nothing would arouse us from our slumbers but a complete burial of a large area of the Valley with the flood waters descending the Mississippi.

Permit me to say we are proud to assert to-day that there is a class who call no man master, that are willing to use their own reasoning power, without asking permission of any clique of so-called scientists, who are proud to carry a collar with their owner's name written large thereon. We expect some to continue to side with the levee and jetty ring, and to hug themselves that they are always with that party that has looked to its own fire-sides, and as for the people, in the language of Mr. Vanderbilt, "the people be damned!" To question Captain Eads' ability and wisdom in matters pertaining to the jetty and levee problem is considered by some to be rank blasphemy, and nothing short of it. Eads was the scientific Mahomet at whose shrine the all-levée men worshipped, and hence, to intimate any doubt as to his infallibility is to call down upon ourselves the whole pack, "Tray," "Blanche" and "Sweet-heart," in yelping chorus.

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On the 17th of April, 1893, I was invited to address the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of outlets. My remarks to this intelligent body assembled, while fully appreciating the compliment implied in the invitation, I took it for granted that the intelligent members of a highly respected commercial body naturally desired to hear both sides of a very important question, involving a problem, the solution of which is vital to the city and the entire Valley.

We present to the world to-day the stupid spectacle of a people who have deliberately obstructed the discharge of a mighty river 3184 miles in length, and confined its outgoing to an outlet filled with millions of tons of rocks; placed to construct jetties, to concentrate the waters through the South Pass, and men wonder how the vast quantity of mud and sand borne by this mighty stream is gradually filling up and raising the bed of the river.

True it is that our scientific friends who control the Levee Commission, and the expenditures of the millions annually voted for the river, boldly declare that this is simply a delusion; and so they go on building levees higher and higher every year to demonstrate the correctness of their theory and the perpetuation of their occupation. "Science hath its bubbles as the waters hath, and this of them." Will our poor deluded people never learn that science has its false prophets, as well as religion, and that when we give up our right or private judgment, and submit ourselves to the dictation of a few mediocrities who have labeled themselves scientists, it is a clear case of the blind leading the blind and

plunging into the ditch with the inevitable result.

There never was a time when the people so needed strong, able men—strong enough to be able to rise above cliques and combinations, never mind how strongly entrenched, and who, seeking the general good, would demand of the scientific Levee Commission that it submit its assured facts to the test of experiment. That it allow proof or disproof as to the constant rise of the bed of the river, under their bungling and stupid all-levee theory.

To reject combining outlets with a perfect levee system in the State of Louisiana is to admit to the world that we are all scientifically hypnotized and held spell-bound by our all levee advocates from one season to the next.

The planters of the valley—their true condition! Having submitted patiently for fifteen years to the judgment of men supposed to be actuated by the best of motives in the welfare of the present and future generations to come, did not realize until they were reduced to poverty the enormity of their situation. The literature of the jetty and levee organs was magnified to that extent that we imagined that nothing but milk and honey would flow in the Valley.

When the jetty company was organized it was doubtless their intention to make it a paying job; influential papers must be controlled to educate the people to any standpoint that would be essential to their interests.

The history of the manner of constructing the jetties is too well known to require repeating. When the work was completed sufficiently to expect results we

Imagine the company was greatly surprised when they found that the scouring process did not progress as expected.

What next. A line of explosives was laid in the Pass to supplement the scouring process. When laid it was expected that great results would be accomplished by the jetties—oh, no! by explosives. Finally the electric button was sprung and up went the water to an unknown height. The inspection that followed revealed the fact that explosives would not blow out a channel. What next? The mammoth dredgeboat was ordered, and no channel was obtained until the dredgeboat cut it, and we will find that this same boat is in commission at the Pass to this day. Now the Jetty Company, I charge, are the promoters of this all-levee system; they advocated the closing of all outlets and the turning of Red River into the Mississippi River (to deepen the channel). Oh, no! it was for the purpose of elevating the flood level to give increased current through the Passes, hoping that by the increased elevation of the flood water they would get increased velocity for their scouring absurdity. The elevation, we all well know, would give a greater and increased current.

Now the elevation of our levees to their present height and the prolonging of the discharge of the flood waters to the Gulf for the want of sufficient outlets causes the water to remain against our levees six and seven months, and the consequence is if we escape a crevasse our crops are destroyed by seepage water.

Why should the State of Louisiana or the entire Valley object to quickly passing the vast volume of water that annually descends to the Gulf? Is there a

man among us that disputes our ability to do this, from either side of the river below the mouth of Red River?

Now we not only pass the water by increasing the discharges in less time, but think of the millions of dollars saved to the State by reducing the annual strain upon our levees by shortening the period of pressure, at the same time obviate the raising of the levees beyond the limit of safety to human life.

At the same time the waters remaining on the natural banks for a less period they would not be dissolved and slide into midstream, as is the case now from waters standing for months every year. When drainage is combined with our levee system, then we can proclaim to the world, in the language of Captain T. P. Leathers, in a speech delivered at Baton Rouge: "Trim up your levees, place Rosetta gravel or Asphalt on top of same, and give to the ladies a promenade, walk and drive."

With a thorough system of outlets our levees would be permanent, less caving banks and fewer changes in our levee lines.

Captain Eads, in his report, advised the closing of the Atchafalaya by placing sills or draws across the stream, so as to stop it from enlarging and to force gradually the waters of the Red River into the Mississippi River. The reasons assigned for doing so were that when Red River emptied its entire volume of water into the Mississippi we had higher banks, that the bottom was cut out and by the additional flow of water from the Red River into the Mississippi again the channel would be improved by doing so.

Now did Captain Eads lose sight of the

fact that when Red River was pouring its entire volume of water into the Mississippi River, *that all outlets were wide open*, giving free and rapid discharge of water into the Gulf? Did he forget the fact that \$5,000,000 worth of obstructions had been placed at the Passes for the benefit of New Orleans? Did he suppose, or his associates, that everybody would close their eyes and refuse to look back and remind the present generation why it was that the Mississippi River could carry to the Gulf its own waters and that of Red River and its tributaries? Yes, yes, turn Red River into the Mississippi River, with all natural outlets closed by levees, and the mouth of the river damned up by wing dams, and the millions of tons of ballast that is dumped at the Passes for the past fifteen years for the purpose of forcing all the water possible into South Pass, what a spectacle would be presented to our once happy and independent people.

What man capable of finding any calling in life could call all this rot science? Was it outlets that gave the Mississippi River the deep channel that Captain Eads referred to when Red River emptied into the Mississippi, (outlets in those days drew the water from the bottom of the river as well as from the top.) Every outlet carried its portion of mud and sand to our lowlands and marshes, and the water to the Gulf almost clear.

Friends of the Valley, stop and think! Have you not for the past ten years worked manfully for your own downfall? Have you not aided liberally with your time and money in erecting monuments that will stand in many places to be pointed at by your grandchildren as the

cause of your loss of grand estates in the Mississippi Valley, by rejecting the outlet system in combination with our levee system?

Is there any deep-laid scheme to affect the prosperity of the present owners or the former owners of grand estates? Why should intelligent men allow the mouth of the river to be molested? Was it for the purpose of elevating the flood waters higher each year against our levees to more effectually destroy planting interests and reduce the present owners to want and beggary, and by so doing foreign capital would the sooner step in and take possession of homes and firesides?

Let me warn you, friends of the Valley: capital will be distributed for the purpose of buying all lands offered for two-thirds less than their former value. When your lands pass into the hands of a few promoters of your loss and ruin you will see a great change come over them. They will no longer suppress the fact that all rivers leveed with no outlets soon fill up. They will discover without the aid of the River Commission that to pass the waters to the Gulf quickly we must adopt the outlet system.

We must open the great commerce artery, we must bleed her freely to save our friends. If something is not done our homes will pass into strangers' hands, who will enjoy security, health and wealth.

They will teach you how simple it is to pass the waters to the Gulf, with levees repaired and raised to proper levels and sufficient drainage to pass the waters quickly to the Gulf, happiness and prosperity will follow to those who hold on until the work is completed

Every one will be more or less subjected to losses. Manufacturing interests in New Orleans and the Valley will suffer until capitalists decide that they are satisfied to unclog the wheels of progress by removing the embargo placed by Captain Eads and company. This is a very disagreeable subject to the all-levee builders. Nevertheless they must submit to improvements that will secure protection. Outlets we must have, for the Valley shall be redeemed and rescued from men who are actuated by the size of their pockets to hold the boodle derived from the so-called science of the present day, that is bringing ruin and devastation to so many once happy homes. We do not expect devastating overflows every year. To have overflows now every year in the lower river it is time for the people to act, and as long as we continue to contract the great volume of water we will elevate the flood height, fill the bottom up and continue to elevate the levees to the end of time.

The States bordering on the Mississippi river are sovereign States, and it is the duty of their assemblies to protect the States' interest by looking into this job, foisted on the people of the Valley. We are willing that the government shall continue to devote special supervision over the work mapped out for the building of levees, and we are grateful for the favors so liberally bestowed. We are sorry, however, that St. Louis, Memphis, Vicksburg and New Orleans can not furnish suitable headquarters for the River Commission. To be located in New York it must impose hardships that we regret very much.

The jetty and levee organs published in

New Orleans represent, it is said, over 2000 State and government engineers and levee officials. This little army is able to furnish to their papers many soap-bubble theories to keep up their fences. They evidently are trying to pattern after the engineers of China. They do know that as long as they can prevent outlets the levees must be raised to the end of time.

As for the improvement of navigation a GREATER FARCE was never played on earth. The miserable farce of improving navigation by filling up the bed of the river, by dumping stone, driving piling to form mud and sand bars, closing outlets to elevate the flood waters. The great Engineer on high gave to this great river inlets and outlets. The outlets were formed for the discharge of the silt to our lowlands. It is outlets that deepen the channel by drawing off the mud and sand. We are tired of being insulted by false statements that are being heralded by men who have only one object in view—men calling themselves engineers have the impudence to assert that outlets fill up the bed of the river.

Let us inform those bright lights that the Mississippi River discharged through outlets and the mouth for five thousand years before they saw the light of day. A dime museum should employ all such men. The object lessons we learn now is to improve all inlets and close up all outlets. This is called science.

In the name of high Heaven, where are we drifting?

May the strong arm of our State governments, having jurisdiction in the Valley, save us from further devastation by ordering that outlets shall be made to improve navigation and deepen the bed of

the river, and lower the flood level, that we may save the Valley to our people, that is being daily rendered less secure for habitation each year. Delay in demanding the lowering of the flood level means destruction and the abandonment of your homes.

Will our State officials of Louisiana submit to the cutting of the canal across Carr's point and allow the Red River to be forced into the Mississippi River?

Preparations are being made to do this, and not one word of protest do we hear. What does this mean? *Alone this, my friends*, and the work of destruction is inevitable. The coast plantations—their former grandeur—will be in song and story.

The jetty job will cost the people in the Valley all they possess if something is not done to stop this suicidal monkey business.

The levees built we must maintain, and we can not dispense with them.

The jetties we do not desire to remove by any means, as it would be impossible to do so, and as the channel is scoured by a dredge boat, it matters not to the people how it is done so long as it is done.

We are surely wise enough to combine sufficient drainage to overcome all obstacles to the discharge of the water rapidly to the Gulf, and leave the jetty science free in all its glory, and to do and dam up to their hearts' content. When the planting interest of the Valley is free from its withering blight then the inhabitants may look for restoration. May we not reflect for a moment and be reminded that Reason, man's highest, greatest gift from the Creator, is held subject to conditions,

and if we fail to exercise the faculty we are prepared to become slavish tools of the designing and knavish.

When we realize how few men think for themselves we readily understand how a multitude can be led to the very verge of ruin for years, yea centuries, and be influenced to aid in their own downfall with their time and their money.

Last year we had twelve crevasses. Five remained open and discharged water that did not return to the Mississippi River. The principal crevasses were on the east bank of the river, between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. The volume of water passing through these breaks was carefully measured and is reported. The total discharge was 257,886 cubic feet per second, equal to all the waters reported passing Helena during the whole month of December. Now in the face of all these facts we have men among us who have made the assertion that the flood waters in the lower part of the river were not lowered by this excessive discharge of water. Comment is unnecessary. We leave that class of men to their utter and hopeless hypnotic spell. It is time for thinking men to come to the front and say this devastation shall cease, that the Mississippi Valley shall be reclaimed and be made to bloom yearly with the abundance that its soil will produce when properly drained.

Emigration! Emigration! Why, bless your soul, the wealth of nations would be thrown into this great Valley.

All eyes of the nation have looked and longed for the time to come when a sensible and rational plan shall be adopted, and the nation's verdict, if left to a vote, would be to combine drainage with the

levee system as the only way to give lasting and permanent protection. I say to one and all, send no man to the Legislature or Congress who will not demand the only way to improve navigation and reclaim the lands from overflow and devastation.

And to those who are clamoring for immigration as the remedy for all our woes, let it be proclaimed loudly that immigration will never come until we have complied with the first prerequisite—safety for home and property in this great Valley.

In conclusion, I am in favor of a deep water outlet to the sea, and readily subscribe to all the advantages claimed for it by its most enthusiastic advocates. To maintain a deep channel at the mouth of this river will require the expenditure of vast sums of money to the end of time. A deep canal will solve the problem. The ship-loads of stone dumped at the mouth, from year to year, will elevate the flood height, and keep the outflow seeking and making new channels. You may place all the stone to be found in the Western States at the mouth and the water of this great river will go to the sea, notwithstanding.

Now let the voice of the people ascend from the Valley to the hill tops, proclaiming that we have submitted long enough. Our starving women and children, with uplifted eyes, are appealing to

us to-day, saying give us protection for our homes, and we will not beg for bread.

And we appeal to our Government for all the aid possible for maintaining a good levee system. And we beg the combining of outlets at such points as will insure the lowering of the flood waters and secure the rapid discharge of the same to the Gulf.

And may the Great Ruler of the Universe incline our hearts and minds to do and recommend for the best interest of our people, who have WAITED SO PATIENTLY for results promised that we now see will never be consummated until levees and outlets are combined.

G. H. TICHENOR.

The Daily N. O. States, at the inception of an able editorial, says:

“That a survey should be made under the auspices of the War Department, independently and exclusive of the Mississippi River Commission, and that no engineer or other attache or individual appendage of that body shall take part in it.

“We suggested this condition, not because we question the integrity or ability of the members of the Commission, but because they are absolutely wedded to the all-levee system and will tolerate no opposition to, or criticism of, their hobby.”

THE OUTLET SYSTEM.

Address of Captain T. P. Leathers to the delegates attending the Convention
for the improvement of the Western Waterways, held in
New Orleans, April 7, 1885.

GENTLEMEN—You are assembled here to-day to discuss and act upon one of the greatest problems of the age. For many years the question as to the most practical and effective method of improving our great waterway has been agitated, and the various schemes of science and experience, as applicable to this magnificent avenue of commerce, urged with vigor on the people, as well as upon their representatives at the National Capital. That this question of substantial and permanent improvement is still a debatable one, is amply evidenced in the fact that the Mississippi River, despite the large sums of money from year to year appropriated to it, the continuous application of science in its behalf, etc., is to-day, as far as its navigable features and the unflinching regularity of its destructive floods are concerned, considerably worse off than it has ever been within the recollection of the oldest and most observing inhabitant of the Valley. Had it been otherwise, had the purposes for which these large sums have been annually and liberally expended been accomplished even in part, there would be no necessity for this convention, and you, gentlemen, would be at home attending other and perhaps more pleasant duties.

Considering the importance and magni-

tude of the subject discussed, and the ends sought to be attained, there can not possibly be too full and comprehensive an expression of views on the policy to be pursued on the improvement of the great thoroughfare of the Valley. It is, therefore, meet and proper that the views and experience of those who have faith in the work of the River Commission, as well as those who favor the application of the outlet system and all the systems, and the men of intelligent observation, whose lives have been spent either on the bosom of the Father of Waters or along its banks, and whose currents, caprices, high and low stages, have been their constant study, and the better part of their education for that matter, all should be heard on this occasion and their testimony given that consideration due it as bearing upon a perfect solution of the great question at issue. For a period covering considerably over forty years I have been a friend of the Mississippi River, and in return it has been my best friend. On its surface floats my stock in trade. I have no interests that are not identified with it. Along its banks I have built my home and reared my children, and all I have now or may expect to have in future is inseparably linked with the substantial and permanent welfare of the Mississippi

River. Hence, when I say that this great highway of commerce is to-day in a worse condition, practically speaking, than it has ever been within the knowledge of the present generation, the motive which prompts the allegation should be at least considered an honest one. To what cause, you ask, do you attribute the late high water in the lower Valley? To which I will most emphatically make answer, that there are two great causes for this trouble: the one, stopping up the mouth of the river; and the other, closing up the outlets which have heretofore assisted in carrying off the surplus water in times of flood.

There is not a man in Mississippi or Louisiana who is old enough to remember an overflow, without the assistance of the upper Mississippi and Missouri. Until the mouths of the river were stopped up, the Ohio was never regarded as a contributory cause to the floods in the lower Valley. Yet, disastrous floods of 1882, 1883 and 1884 were entirely from the Ohio, other big streams which had been large contributors in former years being closed up. And, again, there is not a man in Louisiana who is old enough to remember a dangerous rise in the river, which began at the mouth and extended upwards. Yet, this has been the case during the past few years. Forty years ago levees were quite unnecessary, and wholly unknown, in both Tensas and Concordia parishes. To-day, a six-foot levee is found to be totally inadequate.

If I were consulted as to a proper remedy for the troubles from which the lower Valley is at present suffering, I would most assuredly suggest the application of the outlet system. Let the jetty system

remain as it is, for, although it has failed to accomplish what its friends claim for it, it has nevertheless done some good, even to the detriment of the river at large. Turn out education and science for a while, and open up Plaquemine and Bonnet Carre if you will. But the principal relief, however, is located ten miles below New Orleans, through Lake Borgne, where exists the principal trouble. There are only five miles between the lake and the river, and in this distance there is a fall of fifteen feet. In my judgment this outlet will afford permanent and substantial relief to the entire Valley. But scientific men, who work out their problems on paper, allege that an outlet at Lake Borgne would shoul the river between there and the mouth so as to practically destroy its usefulness as a navigable stream. There exists, however, a difference of opinion on this subject. The practical ones, masters of steamboats and pilots included, who make a study of the peculiarities of the currents of the Mississippi, know that the bottom follows the surface in nearly all the shoal places, and that frequently, when the river is at medium height, there is usually less navigable water in it than when it is comparatively low.

As an illustration of what I mean. In August, 1880, there were but nine and one-half feet of water between New Orleans and Vicksburg, but on October 10, after the river had fallen thirteen feet, the soundings showed that there were eleven and one-half feet in the channel, or two feet more than there was when the river was thirteen feet higher.

It is a fact well established that the building of levees has had considerable

to do in influencing the currents of the river. For instance, in 1836, during my first steamboating on the Mississippi, there were no levees above Red River, and at that time there were but six and one-half feet of water in the channel. The steamer Natchez got aground at Natchez Island and lay there two months unable to get off. Yet, after building levees along the river in 1855, with the surface eighteen inches lower than it was in 1836, there were nine feet of water in the channel. And, then, again, there has, of late years, been noticeable quite a change in the speed of the current in the main channel in times of flood.

Before the jetties were planted, when the river was at flood height, the current moved a little fraction over four miles an hour. The officer in command of the Kearsage, which was lying at New Orleans during the flood of 1883, logged the river frequently at that time, but did not detect a current that exceeded a fraction over three miles an hour.

Previous to the consideration of the jetties, the Southwest Pass carried off 55 per cent. of the water from the river, the Pass-a-l'Outre 32 per cent. and the South Pass, which is now used for navigation, carried off but 12 per cent. The Western Metropolis went out of Pass-a-l'Outre in 1874 drawing over twenty-one feet of water. There is but five feet of water there now. The Southwest Pass has shoaled nine feet, whilst the South Pass, which was the narrowest of the three, has increased its depth fourteen feet. The volume of water as discharged during flood pressure I do not think is exceeding three-fifths of what it was before. The water is, therefore, backed up in the

river, and continues to rise until it breaks the levees and overflows the country.

When the water is running down faster than it can be discharged at the mouth there must of necessity be a continuous accumulation in the river, which will cause it to swell until it breaks over the staunchest and highest levees; hence, there is but one relief, viz: get the water out of the river, and likewise but one way to afford this relief—make a practical application of the outlet system. There are some who assert that by making cut-offs, so as to straighten the channel of the river, reduce the amount of friction, and accelerate the flow, the required relief might be obtained. But this is all the most utter folly.

Between Vicksburg and New Orleans, from time to time, many cut-offs have been made. At False River thirty miles were chopped off, at Raccoure 26 miles, Red River 10, Homachitta 20, Concordia 22, Lake St. John 10, Cole's Creek 18, Lake St. Peter 12, Lake Bruin 16, Lake St. Joseph 25, Lake Palmyra 24, Lake Vick 8, making in all 231 miles which have been cut away, and yet the distance between Vicksburg and New Orleans is the same to-day as it was a hundred years ago. As the river shortens itself in one place, it always lengthens out at another. There are places where I can run ten or twelve miles and not touch a point where the river was forty years ago.

At the mouth of Red River the water is stagnant and has almost entirely ceased to discharge into the Mississippi. Now, the fact of the matter is, the pent up waters of the latter stream have backed up to the Red River so as to force the entire flow through the cut-off into the

Atchafalaya, whither the Mississippi will soon flow, unless some steps are immediately taken to prevent it.

At present the mouth of the Mississippi is flush up to the flood mark and in places running over the banks into the Gulf. The jetties are nine miles long and about 140 to 160 yards wide. At the head of the Pass there is a very decided acceleration of the current caused by the funnel-like concentration. Here the play of the river between extreme high and low water is but four feet. As you go up the stream this margin is constantly increased. At this point, for instance, it is sixteen feet, at Natchez fifty and so on. About March 1st, with the water quite flush up to the flood line at the mouth, it lacked but three feet of being at the high water mark here. To give an idea of my meaning, the following, compiled about March 1st, 1885, will fully explain, beginning at Memphis and following the stream down: At Memphis it was but 10½ feet above low water, whilst at Helena it was 15, at Vicksburg 28, at St. Joe 24½, at Natchez 32, at Red River 34½, and at Port Hickey it was 37 feet above low water mark.

Judging from the above figures it would appear to a man of ordinary intelligence that a rise had begun at the mouth of the river and was traveling up towards the head,

In conclusion, I would state that I am totally opposed to the present system of improving the river. I am opposed to driving piles in its channel, obstructions between the banks of the river, or otherwise checking or retarding the free flow of

water from the way in which nature has directed.

I am opposed to bridges, piers or towers, as constructed in or across the stream, or to the depositing of stone or other clap-net at the bottom of the river. In 1832 the river at Cincinnati reached the unprecedented height of 63 feet. No such rise was ever experienced after until February last, when the gauge indicated the appalling figures, 71 feet, which was an increase of eight feet over the great rise of 1832, and yet, strange to say, it did not reach nor was it felt as far down as Paducah. Now, all this is attributable to the artificial work at and around Cincinnati, which, according to a rough estimate, checks just one-fourth of the flow of water at Cincinnati.

I am in favor of removing from the channel all wrecks, snags and logs around which sediment, drift, etc., constantly accumulates, stopping up the channel, and in time forming islands and sand bars, which are destructive to navigation.

I believe in the building and maintenance of levees as indispensable adjuncts to the improvement of navigation in the Mississippi. They are a protection to the rich alluvial lands behind them; they are a safeguard against danger; they aid, assist and encourage navigation, and without them no interest is secured, and the Mississippi is tameless and treacherous.

In fine, I desire to have it understood that I am for levees first, last and all the time. Respectfully,

T. P. LEATHERS

LET JUSTICE BE DONE.

GOVERNOR FISHBACK'S APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT—ARTICLES FROM CAPTAIN T. P. LEATHERS, ETC., SHOWING CONCLUSIVELY THE FALLACY OF THE ALL-LEVEE SYSTEM.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., June 10.

To His Excellency, Grover Cleveland—
Mr. President: The repeated and devastating overflows of half a million acres of farms in this State, Missouri and Louisiana, in view of the past history of our national legislation, have assumed the nature of a national disgrace, if not of a national crime. The Mississippi River and its tributaries, if properly managed, offer 15,000 miles of free navigation to more than half of the people and nearly two-thirds of the area of the United States, excluding Alaska. The States and Territories drained by their waters are the most fertile in the world, and yield three-fourths of the agricultural and meat products of our Union. These navigable waters are by our laws placed under the exclusive jurisdiction of the national government, and are the free and natural outlets for the enormous traffic of this vast area. Yet, during the past thirty or forty years our National Legislature has given nearly 200,000,000 acres of our public lands and nearly \$100,000,000 of public money to private corporations with which to construct artificial highways to be owned by private individuals, while disgracefully neglecting these natural water highways, which be-

long to all the people, and to foster which is demanded by every obligation of national duty, as well as every consideration of national policy. Owing to this neglect the people of these States and Territories are not only forced to transport products of their labor over these artificial and private highways at such a great cost to both producer and consumer as in many instances to amount to positive inhibition; but all along the alluvial lands bordering upon the streams, the homes of the people are left without protection against these frequent inundations, which are producing so much and such shocking destitution and distress.

It is estimated that 500,000 acres of cultivated lands on the west bank of the Mississippi River are under water for the third time within fifteen months, and more than 50,000 people have been for the third time within this period robbed of the products of their toil until positive want stares them in the face. If one-half the money which Congress has given to private rail roads had been expended upon these natural highways not only would we have free and ample navigation along all these navigable streams throughout the year, but these unhappy people would have been spared these disastrous over-

flows. Yet to the 250 miles along the St. Francis front in this State and Missouri only \$264,000 have been allotted for levees, a sum so ludicrously inadequate as to constitute a disgraceful mockery.

I can not but feel, sir, that I should be wanting in duty to the unfortunate victims of this shameful neglect if I were to fail to call public attention, as well as that of your administration, to this criminal dereliction on the part of Congress, which seems to have legislated for many years past in the interest of the various corporations, rather than in the interest of the people who elect it. Very respectfully.

WM. M FISHBACK,
Governor of Arkansas.

(Signed)

NEW ORLEANS, June 24, 1893.

Editor Daily States:

DEAR SIR—Before Governor Foster, accompanied by Congressmen Boatner, Robertson and others, took his trip up the river for the purpose of inspecting the levees, I requested him to examine the mouth of the stream and to state the result of his investigation. I thought that this expose (I call it nothing else) should be made, but instead of following my advice, he took his party up the river, without examining the mouth, which I think is the cause of the present disastrous flood.

Now I think that it is the duty of Governor Foster and the same party who accompanied him before, to examine the river between here and the Arkansas line and ascertain the causes of the present high stage of the water. They should find out where this water we are having at New Orleans is from. It certainly has not passed Cairo. This expose should be

made to the people of the Valley. I have always favored levees as a means of protection for the Valley, and if you will draw out the water from the river and make the outflow greater than the inflow there will never be any danger of overflow. Now, from my observations of the river (and I have been constantly on it for over half a century), I can safely say that I have never seen less water come down the stream in twelve months than has been the case during the last year. The people must have relief or they must abandon the Valley. A man does not get his information of the river at school; all the knowledge he can gain of it is by observation. Whenever I see men who profess to know more about the river than pilots and steamboat captains who have spent their lives on it, I look upon them simply as educated fools. I believe from the bottom of my heart that if the outlet plan now before the Senate is approved it will be successful and will not cost the people or government one dollar. The projectors propose to buy the right of way, protect the people from overflow and reduce the flood lines at New Orleans, Vicksburg, Memphis and Cairo, charging only for the reduction of the flood lines. I am so positive of the success of the idea that I will invest every dollar I have in it. I hope that this will satisfy the levee cranks as to my feelings in the matter and be the means of securing dry ground for my friends in the Valley. If the outlet plan I speak of is approved at the next Congress, we would be able to relieve the people of the pressure of high water in the lower Mississippi next summer. The matter should be attended to without delay. Respectfully,

T. P. LEATHERS.

WHERE IS THE WATER COMING FROM?

NEW ORLEANS, JUNE 22, 1892.

Editor Daily States:

DEAR SIR—I have called on the engineers and other parties charged with the duty of perfecting and maintaining the all-levee system, and have in vain endeavored to ascertain the causes of the present high water in the lower Mississippi River. The water in the rivers that feed the mighty North American stream, the Ohio, Missouri, Tennessee, etc., is, and has been, at a low stage, and hence the Mississippi could not be affected by these rivers. If the water in the great Father of Waters has reached such a high stage without the aid of its tributary streams, spreading devastation and ruin everywhere, what would be the result of swollen rivers among those that flow into the Mississippi? It would be too horrible to contemplate. Unless we undo what has been done at the mouth of the river to prevent the flow of water, or provide outlets to attain this end, we must surely abandon the Valley. Respectfully,

T. P. LEATHERS.

The Baton Rouge Truth draws the following graphic picture of the desolation and ruin now wrought annually by the all-levee policy:

"The Mississippi River Commission has adhered to a system which annually brings terror to the lower Valley, and regularly devastates large sections of alluvial country. Once a year the people behind the levees forsake all other occupations, and for a month or two devote their

energies and their money to fight the floods, knowing that somebody must be ruined, but each hoping that he will escape by superhuman exertion. They are no more protected than a city which is subjected perpetually to siege by a foreign foe, with the absolute certainty that there will from time to time be a breach in the walls somewhere, to be followed by rapine and plunder of at least a portion of the inhabitants. There is no security and no protection where such a condition exists. The mud walls may be piled higher and higher, and made stronger and stronger, but the floods will continue to break the barriers until there will be no need of argument to prove the fallacy of the all-levee system in the face of insurmountable facts. The persistent purpose of theorists to thwart the laws of nature in controlling the mighty volume of water which flows down to the Gulf by the great river is already rebuked by bursting barriers and increased floods, and it is only a question of time when practical ideas must be adopted in a change of the system to a combination of outlets and levees as the only means of giving relief. The present system is a failure. The problem now presented is whether we shall provide a judicious and comprehensive plan of outlets to relieve the tension of the floods with the least injury to riparian property, or continue the system which results in crevasses at random, forced outlets which devastate fields, destroy growing crops and ruin proprietors, besides necessitating the expenditure of millions of money to meet emergencies resulting from a false system."